

**Case 3640*****Touit* G.R. Gray, 1855 and *Prosopeia* Bonaparte, 1854 (Aves, PSITTACIDAE): proposed conservation of usage**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application, under Articles 78.1, 80.2.2 and 81.2.2 of the Code, is to conserve current usage of the well-established genus-group name *Touit* G.R. Gray, 1855 for a genus of South American parrotlets by suppression of the earlier but little-used, taxonomically ambiguous name *Pyrrhulopsis* Reichenbach, 1850. This course of action would also help to confirm the validity of the widely used genus-group name *Prosopeia* Bonaparte, 1854 for the Fijian shining parrots which has also been replaced by *Pyrrhulopsis* at times owing to differing interpretations of its meaning.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Aves; *Touit*; *Prosopeia*; *Pyrrhulopsis*; shining parrots; parrotlets; Central America; South America; Fiji.

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1. Since Peters's (1937, p. 208) global checklist of parrots, the genus-group name *Touit* G.R. Gray, 1855 has been used for a distinct group of, Central and South American green parrotlets with purplish red to yellow side-bands in the tail. Although Gray attributed the name to Lesson (1830, p. 201 in livraison 3), Lesson had used the name only in the vernacular as 'Les Touits'. Gray (1855, p. 89) nevertheless treated *Touit* as a genus name and made it available under Article 12.2.5 by explicitly including *Psittacus huetii* (as '*Hueti*') Temminck, 1830 (text to pl. 491 in livraison 83) and designating it as type species. *Touit* is in wide use for these parrotlets today, and we have submitted a list of almost 100 usages in the last 70 years to the

Commission's secretariat. Not only does this submission record the usage of the name in diverse global and regional checklists, handbooks, field guides and scientific papers dealing with these parrots, but also in the species database of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES, 2013). No other name appears to have been used for this genus for over 70 years.

2. Also since Peters (1937, p. 250), the genus-group name *Prosopeia* Bonaparte, 1854 (p. 153) has been widely used for the large red or yellow shining parrots of Fiji. This name was made available under Article 12.2.5 by combination with the nominal species *Coracopsis personata* G.R. Gray, 1848 (p. 21) which is available under Articles 11.5.1 and 11.9.3.4 (see Gray, 1848, p. 20) and is its type species by monotypy. We have compiled and lodged with the Commission's Secretariat a list of 70 usages of *Prosopeia* in global and regional checklists, handbooks, field guides, research papers and Fiji government publications. *Prosopeia* is the genus-group name used for the shining parrots in the IUCN (2012) Red List of threatened species and in Appendix 2 of CITES (CITES, 2013). Of the three species in the genus, one is listed as vulnerable on the Red List, and another as near-threatened.

3. *Prosopeia*, however, is not the only genus-group name that has been used for the shining parrots since Peters (1937). Gregory & Dickinson (2012), drawing on Kashin (1978), found that Gray (1855, p. 85) had also designated *Coracopsis personata* (spelled '*Coracopsis? personatus*') as type species of the earlier *Pyrrhulopsis* Reichenbach, 1850. Gregory & Dickinson (2012) went on to show that *Pyrrhulopsis* had been used since 1899 by Sharpe (1900) and so could not be declared a nomen oblitum under Article 23.9.2 of the Code. Accordingly, they treated the senior objective synonym *Pyrrhulopsis* as valid for the shining parrots, and it was used to replace *Prosopeia* in the 4th edition of the influential *Howard & Moore Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World* (Dickinson & Remsen, 2013, p. 377 and footnote). These are the only usages of *Pyrrhulopsis* that we know of in printed literature since Peters (1937, p. 250 footnote) rejected it over 75 years ago. It leads us to suggest that resurrection of *Pyrrhulopsis* for the shining parrots breaches the purpose of Article 23.2 of the Code. Since Dickinson & Remsen (2013), however, *Pyrrhulopsis* has been adopted for the shining parrots on the websites Avibase (2013) and TiF Checklist (2013).

4. Reichenbach (1850, p. 82) made *Pyrrhulopsis* available by giving uncoloured diagrammatic figures of the head, foot and tail of an apparently small parrot (Article 12.2.7). No species were assigned. The figures show a generalized parrot of ambiguous identity; its cere is feathered although the two genera for which *Pyrrhulopsis* has subsequently been used have naked ceres. The first author that we have found to have assigned species to *Pyrrhulopsis* is Bonaparte (1854, p. 152) who listed six South American parrotlets which today are all placed in *Touit* G.R. Gray. They were (with their currently used synonyms in parentheses): 'Hueti Temm.' (*huetii* Temminck, 1830), 'Purpuratus Gm.' (*purpuratus* Gmelin, 1788), 'Melanopterus Gm.' (*batavicus* Boddaert, 1783), 'Porphyurus Sw.' (*purpuratus* Gmelin, 1788), 'Surdus Ill.' (*surdus* Kuhl, 1820), and 'Melanotus Licht.' (*melanonotus* Wied, 1820). No type species was designated. Gray (1855, p. 85) appears to have been the first to designate a type species, choosing *Coracopsis personata* G.R. Gray, the Masked Shining Parrot of Fiji (see paragraph 2 above). Bonaparte (1856, 1857) subsequently accepted Gray's interpretation, transferred *Pyrrhulopsis* to the shining parrots and introduced the

name *Urochroma* for the American parrotlets. *Urochroma* Bonaparte, 1856 is nevertheless junior to *Touit* G.R. Gray, 1855, as pointed out by Peters (1937, p. 208), and is of no further concern here.

5. What has evidently been overlooked is that *Coracopsis personata*, the type species subsequently designated for *Pyrrhulopsis* by Gray (1855), is not one of the species originally included in it by Bonaparte (1854) as required by Article 67.2.2 and so is ineligible for designation as the type species (Articles 69.1 and 69.2). It follows that *Pyrrhulopsis* cannot be applied to the shining parrots. This information is not new. It was worked out by Mathews (1917, p. 289) whose findings were footnoted in Peters' (1937, p. 250) well-known global checklist of birds over 75 years ago.

6. As a consequence, *Prosopeia* Bonaparte, 1854 is no longer threatened by *Pyrrhulopsis* Reichenbach, 1850. However, because of Bonaparte's (1854) initial action in assigning species of parrotlets to *Pyrrhulopsis*, *Touit* (Gray, 1855) is exposed instead (Article 67.2.2). To our knowledge, none of the originally included species of *Pyrrhulopsis* has ever been designated as its type, although current taxonomy places all of them in *Touit* (see Dickinson & Remsen, 2013, pp. 356–357). Subsequent type designation could, however, be performed at any time. *Pyrrhulopsis* is an ambiguous and little-used name that will cause ongoing disturbance and confusion if allowed to move from one genus of parrots in the southwest Pacific (*Prosopeia*) to replace another well-known in South America (*Touit*).

7. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the generic name *Pyrrhulopsis* Reichenbach, 1850 for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Touit* G.R. Gray, 1855 (gender: masculine), type species *Psittacus huetii* Temminck, 1830 by original designation;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Prosopeia* Bonaparte, 1854 (gender: feminine), type species *Coracopsis personata* G.R. Gray, 1848 by monotypy;
- (4) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *huetii* Temminck, 1830, as published in the binomen *Psittacus huetii*, specific name of the type species of *Touit* G.R. Gray, 1855;
- (5) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *personata* G.R. Gray, 1848, as published in the binomen *Coracopsis personata*, specific name of the type species of *Prosopeia* Bonaparte, 1854;
- (6) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Pyrrhulopsis* Reichenbach, 1850, as suppressed in (1) above.

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Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., c/o Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: [iczn@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:iczn@nhm.ac.uk)).